

FSD'S LAST LETTER AS A SINGLE MAN

This month's old letter, dated Aug. 14, 1843 from Francis S. Dunham (1812-1856)(8)(John 1, John 2, John 3, Ebenezer 4, Ebenezer 5, Jonathan 6, Ralph 7) to his fiancée, was the last he was to write her prior to the actual wedding date. Highlighted are the transportation problems of the day (How simple it would be for a modern-day Frank to hop in his Porsche & drive from Berlin, MD, to Washington, DC -- Not all that far away!) & the type of entertainment of the period. We can't know exactly what "conversation cards" were, but it would appear that it was some sort of a game intended to promote stimulating party conversation. Possibly Leah Anna Handy was adroit at avoiding the expected revelations about her true feelings.

"Berlin, Maryland, Aug. 14, 1843. My dear Anna: As this is probably the last letter I shall write during the period of probation, usually demoninated Courtship, it ought, by all means, to be the best. But the lack of the usual stimulus (a letter from yourself) will not be likely to improve either my style or matter. I promise however to make ample amends for it when I come. Indeed, if I lack inspiration then, I shall despair of ever soaring very high.

"Do you recollect the 'conversation cards,' my dear? I fancy that when next we have that game, the cards shall be arranged somewhat differently, & that if you are not disposed to play fair, I shall take the game with my own hands.

"I have been drawing a fancy picture of you & the cottage, & really it works so strongly on my imagination that I feel very much disposed to turn post & bring this letter myself. It is a curious fact that I cannot think of you, or rather call your image to mind, except that it be in a blue dress. I have tried it many times & invariably fail of conjuring up your image unless it be in that particular garb. Are you metaphysician enough to account for it? Perhaps the vision of the Lady in Blue was present during sleep or in waking dreams so frequently that she refuses to appear in any other dress.

"But what shall I do with this week? It lays like a dead weight on my hands. I never before could complain of having too much time.

"You wished if possible to state the exact time of my arrival at the Capital. Since I wrote last I have made some inquiries, but have not been able to learn hours of arrival of the public conveyances, so cannot give specific information. I believe I mentioned before that I might possibly be in Washington on Thursday instead of Saturday, unless you should prefer it otherwise. I cannot yet determine whether I shall or not. I shall probably come via Annapolis. Gorse (??) cousin goes by way of Newark.

"It would naturally be supposed that a man in my circumstances just at this time would not lack for ideas, & yet, would you believe it? I find that in eking out the few meager ones I have already written. I can account for it in no other way than by supposing that 'the leading idea to have taken such exclusive possession of my mind as to leave room for none other,' & as you, my dear, are the archetype of that idea, I shall be able to form no other until, by having the original before my eyes, the type may be removed.

"The stage has just gone by. I must stop. My love, individually, to all friends, & my whole heart to yourself. FRANCIS S. DUNHAM."

NOTE: Their wedding took place on Aug. 29, 1843. Unfortunately, there is no account of that event. On page 2 is a tintype of their eldest granddaughter, Miriam Dunham, at the age of 9 months, in Dec. 1874. Evidently the technology of the time did not allow for removal of her mother's bracing hand.

THE PICTURE AT RIGHT was probably made in Baltimore, MD, on a visit to Miriam's maternal grandparents. At dinner her grandfather (who was a doctor) allowed the baby to chew on a lamb chop bone. She loved it, but she went into convulsions, which resulted in one of her eyes turning inward--a permanent condition.

ABOUT THE PAGE 3 ARTICLE

Abigail Dunham, mentioned in the 3rd paragraph of this interesting article by Allen/Bun Curtis (our submitter), was born in 1720, the daughter of Ebenezer Dunham (b. 1691/2)(4)(John 1, Samuel 2, Samuel 3). The article appeared in the Spring 1999 issue of *The Enterprise* & reappears here by permission of the Berea Historical Society.



Traffic Court Woes--Senior Style

An example of aplomb under pressure (& pretty brash aplomb, too) comes to DD from Allen Curtis, Williamsburg, VA. We don't know the date of this little exchange, but it was reported in the July/Aug. '99 issue of *Reminiscence* & may be of fairly recent vintage.

It seems one Jasper Dunham, age 90, was hauled into court on a Reckless Driving charge. The judge asked him if he didn't think it possible that he had gotten told to drive. Although admitting that some--perhaps most--of 90-year-olds were perhaps no longer capable of operating a motor vehicle, Jasper didn't think that that applied to him. "In school I learned that there were exceptions to every rule," he responded, "& in this case, I am one of them."

Oddly, only one Jasper Dunham is listed in our Dunham Index, & this was a man whose dates were 1838-1918. He lived in Greenville, PA & was the son of Jonathan Dunham (1808-1874)(5) (John 1, Benijah 2, Edmund 3, Jonathan 4). Evidently this Jasper had no children, but the somewhat younger Jasper might belong to this same branch.

He's a bit appalling, but we can't help cheering the old guy on. Go, Jasper! (Just keep out of our lane, please.)

NOTICE: Materials, especially photos, are much needed at this time. The photos can be from any period of photographic history--including last week. Names of subjects need not be Dunham, as long as individuals have a Dunham bloodline. Good-quality photocopies are usually adequate. DD also needs old letters, newspaper clippings, family anecdotes. Please help!

Happened in 1999

From Plymouth Rock to Berea Grit

By Bun Curtis

Shortly after the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, forty-one of them signed the Mayflower Compact which was an agreement for the government of the colony. One of those signers was George Soule, even though a mere servant to Edward Winslow.

Before 1626 George married Mary Becket who had arrived in Plymouth aboard the *Anne* in 1623. George became a relatively rich businessman. By 1640 he had much land in five nearby towns among which was "Ducksburrow" or Duxbury, where he resided until his death in 1679 or thereabouts.

George's granddaughter, Rebecca Soule, was wed in Plymouth on December 13, 1688 to Edmund Weston. Also in Plymouth their grandson, James Weston, married Abigail Dunham on February 9, 1749. James and Abigail moved to Middleboro, a village in Plymouth County.

Huldah Weston was born on February 10, 1767 in Middleboro. When she was a child the Westons moved to New Braintree in Worcester County. Thus, the Soule-Weston line after living in the Plymouth area for about 150 years, made their first westward move. On February 8, 1795, Huldah was wed in New Braintree to Nathaniel Curtis who had lived in the adjoining town of Hardwick, Massachusetts before moving to Richfield, New York where the newlyweds made their home.

Huldah gave birth to her son, Plina, on August 12, 1802, and to a daughter, Lucy, on April 12, 1805. It is thought that Huldah died giving birth to Lucy.

By 1807 Nathaniel Curtis had moved his family farther west to Adams, New York. Soon thereafter he married a recent widow, Chloe Finney. Nathaniel was a farmer and businessman. He owned a large farm on the southern border of Adams and comprises in the bordering town of Ellisburgh.

On April 17, 1826 in Adams, Nathaniel's son, Plina, married Tamar Linman of Ellisburgh. Plina followed in the footsteps of

his father and was a farmer. It has been said of Plina, "In the rough hard work incident to clearing up a new farm few men could compete successfully with him". The couple had 11 children but two died in infancy. Their first two were born in Adams. The second, Nathaniel Crandall Curtis, who was born on August 7, 1830, later was to make his home in Berea.

A couple of years later the Curtis family moved to Chardon, Ohio. It was the first of four moves in a period of seven years. Thus, Plina had plenty of practice "clearing up new farms". In 1840 they moved to Columbia of Lorain County where they lived for twenty years. Tamar's seventh child, Philander Lysander Curtis, was born in Columbia on March 17, 1841. He was later to make his residence in Berea. Two years after Philander came Harlon Page Curtis. He was the third of the four Curtis children to reside eventually in Berea. Also, born in Columbia was the youngest of Tamar's children, Huldah, who lived the first part of her adult life in Berea.

From about 1860 to 1871 Plina Curtis and family had a farm in Streetsboro. Then around 1871 Plina purchased his last farm in Middleburgh. On a map in the 1874 Atlas of Cuyahoga County Plina's farm is found at the extreme southeast part of Middleburgh.

On March 14, 1998, my cousin Steve Beckwith and I were elected members of the General Society of Mayflower Descendants. To be eligible for election we had to supply to the General Historian of the society at Plymouth documents proving the validity of every generation in our lines of direct descent from George Soule.

Any of our cousins who might choose to seek membership in the General Society of Mayflower Descendants would have a much easier time because they would not be required to supply proofs for any of the generations that we have already proven. Steve and I have notified directly or indirectly the following cousins: Ruth Curtis



Signing of the Mayflower Compact

Sellew, Jeannette Curtis, Robert C. Engram, John E. Engram, Marion Kennedy King, Fred Kennedy, Bill Geary, Marge Williams and Dody Curtis Poole. All but Dody are descended from Philander L. Curtis, as are Steve and I. Dody is the great granddaughter of Nathaniel C. Curtis. Of those listed Bob Engram, took immediate advantage of the opportunity and obtained his membership in the Mayflower Society in October of 1998. At one time it was said, with much exaggeration, that the Curtises were related to most of the Berea residents. Who knows, you, too, may be a relative eligible for Mayflower Society membership.

Three daughters of Plina and Tamar Curtis, moved to Elsie, Michigan. They were Arvilla F. who married Sidney R. Darling, Lucretia M. who married John O. Wooll, and Huldah C. who married Henry R. Allen. From the telephone directory we found five Darling families and two Allens now living in Elsie. Because they are prospective cousins we have sent them letters informing them that if they are descended from Arvilla or Huldah Curtis, they are also descendants of George Soule and could become members of the General Society of Mayflower descendants.

Harlon Curtis and his wife Helen Button had six children, four of whom called Berea their home; they were Guy W., Caswell P., Harlon W., and Myrtle I. Curtis. Whom they married, who their children were, etc., we do not know. If any reader knows anything about the descendants of these Curtises, we would appreciate receiving this information. It would be great for the "Soule" to find more cousins.

Still Entitled to \$25.00 Per Year

From Elizabeth E. Brown, Lakewood, CO, we have this 1853 document pertaining to the Revolutionary War pension of Edward Dunham (1753-1844). Edward's son, Seneca Dunham (1807-1887), & his wife, Tirzah, were testifying that Edward's widow, Mary Daniels Dunham, had not remarried & was still entitled to his \$25.00 per year pension. This branch, later located in SW Michigan, has long been one of the most puzzling of any. No one has been able to tie Edward into the larger Dunham picture, nor to determine the relationship between him & the many other Dunhams living very nearby in Michigan, as per the Sophie Dunham Moore book.

1 State of New York
2 County of Orleans ss:
3 On this 28th day of April
4 in the year 1853 personally appeared before
5 the undersigned a Judge of the Orleans County Courts
6 duly authorized to administer oaths [?] for
7 the County aforesaid Seneca Dunham and Tirzah
8 Dunham residents of said County who being
9 duly sworn depose and say that Mary Dunham
10 of Barre in said County is the widow of the
11 identical Edward Dunham, deceased, who was a
12 Revolutionary Pensioner of the United States and
13 who as such Pensioner drew twenty five dollars
14 per annum. That the said Edward Dunham died
15 at Henrietta in the County of Monroe on the
16 25th day of January A.D. 1844 and that
17 the said Mary Dunham still remains a widow
18 and is unmarried.
19 And they further swear that the annexed
20 papers consisting of two sheets and upon
21 which their names are written by themselves on
22 the bottom of each sheet is the Family Record
23 of the said Edward Dunham and Mary Dunham
24 this day taken from the family Bible and that
25 the same has been in the possession of the de
26 -ponents from the time said entries were made
27 therein about eight years since. That the entries
28 made in said Record are in the hand writing made
29 by Edward Dunham, the son of the aforesaid Ed
30 -ward Dunham, except the one relating to the death
31 of the first named Edward Dunham, which entry &
32 writing was made about 1844 and within a year
33 from the time of his death aforesaid by Seneca
Dunham one of these deponents.
34 And they swear that said Record is genuine and

that they are disinterested witnesses.
Seneca Dunham
Tirza Dunham

Dunham Births in New York
compiled by William G. Burke

	year	name	date	location	County	Cer. No.
431	1918	Katherine M.	9/16	Syr.	Onondaga	?
432	1919	M	9/18	Syr.	Onondaga	69144
433	1919	Allen F.	9/8	Syr.	Onondaga	68956
434	1920	Melvin H.	6/8	Syr.	Onondaga	50859
435	1922	Claire	4/20	Syr.	Onondaga	32182
436	1922	Jane E.	11/9	Syr.	Onondaga	94369
437	1908	Doris M.	1/29	Syr.	Onondaga	4472
438	1917	Frank F. Jr.	11/23	Syr.	Onondaga	97002
439	1918	Elenor ? C.	12/23	Syr.	Onondaga	?
440	1900	Harold L.	11/25	Bristol	Ontario	45670
441	1894	Inez M.	9/23	Canandaigua	Ontario	39868
442	1919	Jane F.	10/12	Geneva	Ontario	78456
443	1921	Robert C.	1/6	Geneva	Ontario	6012
444	1922	Ora m.	3/2	Geneva	Ontario	23864
445	1886	M	7/27	Shortsville	Ontario	24530
446	1895	Harry	10/17	Scotchtown	Orange	45930
447	1882	Alice E.	3/25	Carlton	Orleans	72727
448	1886	F	5/12	Carlton	Orleans	14759
449	1888	M	7/20	Carlton	Orleans	25669
450	1890	F	1/11	Carlton	Orleans	1513
451	1893	M	11/5	Carlton	Orleans	45700
452	1898	F	5/29	Holley	Orleans	21301
453	1901	M	1/14	Yates	Orleans	1744
454	1917	Harold A.	10/11	Yates	Orleans	88979
455	1919	Floyd E.	7/22	Yates	Orleans	53554
456	1905	Mauce L.	7/14	Ridgeway	Orleans/Westc	30469
457	1910	F	12/24	Bernhards Bay	Oswego	68959
458	1894	M	4/6	Cleveland	Oswego	12995
459	1901	Hava	9/22	Cleveland	Oswego	36395
460	1906	Howard	4/7	Cleveland	Oswego	35253
461	1914	Fred W.	11/10	Cleveland	Oswego	89920
462	1916	Robert L.	7/20	Cleveland	Oswego	60371
463	1918	Roland F.	4/22	Cleveland	Oswego	?
464	1920	Laverne M.	5/21	Cleveland	Oswego	42827
465	1891	F	12/16	Constantia	Oswego	49606
466	1908	F	11/20	Constantia	Oswego	54511
467	1912	Florine A.	1/29	Constantia	Oswego	5635
468	1913	Abbagale R.	2/	Constantia	Oswego	10123
469	1919	Otis L.	7/6	Constantia	Oswego	53610
470	1921	Etola ? M.	5/17	Constantia	Oswego	43267
471	1911	Frances E.	3/21	Fulton	Oswego	15123
472	1917	Wilbur J.	8/27	Fulton	Oswego	70807
473	1919	Francis	6/24	Fulton	Oswego	46292

TO BE CONTINUED